



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell two-tenths of a percentage point in May 2003 to 5.0 percent from the April 2003 revised rate of 5.2 percent. As school ended, college and high school students entered the labor force to find summer jobs and increased the *Civilian Labor Force* by 160 individuals, from 41,050 in April 2003 to 41,210 in May 2003. Agriculture and the summer construction, retail, and tourism season contributed to an increase in the number of employed individuals. Southeast Idaho Table 1 shows employment increased by 210 to 39,130 from April to May 2003, while the number of unemployed individuals decreased by 50 to 2,080. From May 2002, the MSA's seasonally adjusted unemployment fell nine-tenths of a percentage point from 5.9 percent in May 2002 to 5.0 percent in May 2003. The unemployment rate jumped in early 2002 because the Astaris/FMC closure displaced hundreds of workers. Since then many of the former Astaris/FMC workers, and other construction workers who were displaced by the Astaris/FMC closure, have found employment and the unemployment rate dropped.

Because school districts and Idaho State University prepared to end the 2002-2003 school year, the number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* fell eight-tenths of a percentage point, by 280 jobs, from 33,820 in April 2003 to 33,540 in May 2003. The drop occurred mainly in the *Service-Providing Industries* in *Government Education* (-460). Small reductions also occurred in *Wholesale Trade* (-10) and *Retail Trade* (-50), but fluctuations in those sectors are normal this time of year. Increased construction activity contributed to a net gain of 50 jobs in the *Goods-Producing Industries* in May 2003 over April 2003. From one year ago, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased one percentage point from 33,220 in May 2002 for a gain of 320 jobs. Gains occurred in both the

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	May 2003*	April 2003	May 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,210	41,050	39,020	0.4	5.6
Unemployment	2,080	2,130	2,320	-2.3	-10.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.0	5.2	5.9		
Total Employment	39,130	38,920	36,700	0.5	6.6
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,300	41,680	38,970	-0.9	6.0
Unemployment	1,980	2,140	2,260	-7.5	-12.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8	5.1	5.8		
Total Employment	39,320	39,540	36,710	-0.6	7.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	33,540	33,820	33,220	-0.8	1.0
Goods-Producing Industries	4,480	4,430	4,270	1.1	4.9
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	20	0.0	-50.0
Construction	1,840	1,780	1,590	3.4	15.7
Manufacturing	2,630	2,640	2,660	-0.4	-1.1
Food Manufacturing	430	430	470	0.0	-8.5
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	140	140	110	0.0	27.3
Machinery Manufacturing	40	40	30	0.0	33.3
Other Manufacturing	2,020	2,030	2,050	-0.5	-1.5
Service-Providing Industries	29,060	29,390	28,950	-1.1	0.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,640	6,700	6,650	-0.9	-0.2
Wholesale Trade	1,050	1,060	1,050	-0.9	0.0
Retail Trade	4,320	4,370	4,350	-1.1	-0.7
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,220	1,220	1,200	0.0	1.7
Information	690	670	690	3.0	0.0
Financial Activities	1,720	1,720	1,840	0.0	-6.5
Professional & Business Services	3,390	3,400	3,280	-0.3	3.4
Educational & Health Services	2,700	2,670	3,060	1.1	-11.8
Leisure & Hospitality	3,400	3,270	3,130	4.0	8.6
Other Services	1,250	1,280	1,190	-2.3	5.0
Government Education	5,050	5,510	5,500	-8.3	-8.2
Government Administration	4,230	4,180	3,620	1.2	16.9

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Goods-Producing Industries (210) and the *Service-Providing Industries* (110). In the *Goods-Producing Industries*, large gains in *Construction* jobs (250) outpaced slight decreases in *Manufacturing* (-30). Changes in hiring patterns (increased use of business services such as temporary staffing agencies) and category changes because of two hospitals that merged in the area created significant job movement between *Financial Activities*, *Services*, *Recreation*, and *Government Administration* from last year but overall the number of *Service-Providing* jobs remained similar.

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Please note: Information contained in *Economic Developments* is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.

Bannock County

- The Idaho State Journal, 305 South Arthur in Pocatello, finished the last phase of its three-phase construction project, which began in late 2001. The \$4.1 million project started with the construction of a new printing facility in Preston, a joint production facility used by the Journal and its sister paper, The Harold Journal in Logan, Utah. Since the print operation was moved out of the Pocatello facility, the entire facility has been remodeled in phases so that operations could continue. The project was completed in June and an open house and tour will be held at a later date.
- Some site preparation work has begun on the new Rendezvous Center at Idaho State University. The project is expected to take approximately three years to complete and will begin with demolition of the old East Hall. Site preparation and excavation should continue through the end of 2003. In spring 2004 construction of the building should begin with completion by January 2007. The 256,000-square-foot facility will serve three functions: centralized classrooms, student housing, and central food service. Over the three-year construction phase, the \$34 million project is expected to employ approximately 500 workers.
- The Southeast IdahoWorks Board has awarded a \$55,000 grant to the Idaho State University College of Technology to create Internet classes for a two-year Associate Degree Nursing program. The grant was awarded to help deal with the current nursing shortage in Idaho.
- Old Town Pocatello will lose two major businesses this summer. Penguin Plumbing, located at 525 South Main Street will close after 26 years in Pocatello. The business will liquidate its current stock and close by mid-summer. Another anchor business in Old Town, Carol's, located at 200 South Main will also close. Businesses owner Carol Leiby is retiring.
- SME Steel Contractors laid off 42 workers from its Pocatello facility at the Gateway West Industrial Park. The business said the reduction in staff occurred because the company did not get a contract it had anticipated. The company, based in Jordan, Utah, moved part of its operation to Pocatello during the construction boom in Utah prior to the Olympics. The business fabricates steel for large construction projects such as department stores, casinos, and entertainment arenas.

Bingham County

- Bechtel officials have announced that between 150 and 300 workers at the Idaho Nuclear Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) will be laid

off this summer. The company began to reorganize its operation at the INEEL into two separate organizations to meet the Department of Energy's separate mission for waste clean-up and nuclear research in March 2003, prompting the announced lay offs.

- Edward Jones Investments moved to a new location at 185 Alder Street. The new location provides increased workspace for the business, which is operated by Neil and Mike Anderson.
- Several road construction projects will be done in Bingham County this summer. The Interstate 15 Snake River Bridge construction project is underway and should be completed by September 2003. Work is also underway on the Snake River Bridge near Firth. The bridge and roadway should reopen by the end of July. The Blackfoot and Cedar Point canal bridges on U.S. Highway 91 should be replaced this year.

Caribou County

- Work has begun on the Soda Springs downtown renovation project. The project includes curb and gutter installation, asphalt replacement, and the installation of trees and benches. The work will take place in the area of Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Streets in Soda Springs.
- A natural gas pipeline expansion is underway in Caribou County. The pipeline expansion will pass south of Soda Springs, north of the Alexander reservoir, and across the golf course. The entire project extends from Green River, Wyo., to Pocatello at a cost of \$158 million.
- Caribou County received two grants totaling \$60,500, provided by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. One grant will be used to build a recreational vehicle park and new restrooms/showers at the county fairgrounds; the other grant will be used to build trailer parking in Ant Canyon and along the Blackfoot River Road for people visiting the area.

Shelley Allen, Regional Labor Economist
430 N. 5th Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83205
(208) 236-6710, ext. 3713
E-mail: sallen@jobservice.us